

### **REMARKS**

In the June 18, 2004 Office Action, the abstract is objected to for a minor informality, claims 1-6 and 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,693,920 to Maeda, and claims 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Maeda in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,693,246 to Rudolph et al. Also, claims 13-17 are allowed and claims 9-12 are indicated as being allowable if rewritten into an independent form.

By the present amendment, claims 1, 11 and 18 are amended, claim 3 is cancelled and new claims 21-24 are added. That leaves claims 1, 2, and 4-24 pending in the application with claims 1, 13, 18 and 21 being independent. Independent claims 1 and 18 are amended to clarify that the first lever is rotatably connected to the button. Claim 11 is amended to correct its dependency.

The rejections are respectfully traversed. In summary, neither Maeda nor Rudolph et al. discloses a button with at least a first lever rotatably connected to the button, as recited in independent claims 1 and 18, as amended. Each rejection is addressed in detail below.

#### **Specification**

The abstract is amended to delete any reference to “the present invention,” as suggested in the Office Action.

#### **Claims Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102**

Claims 1-6 and 18-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,693,920 to Maeda. However, a button with first lever pivotally connected to the button, as recited in amended independent claims 1 and 18, is not found in Maeda. Thus, Maeda fails to anticipate the claimed invention.

Instead, Maeda discloses a button 13 pivotally attached to a base 19 and that includes plates 15a-15d that abut button 13. More specifically, each plate 15a-15d includes a projection 42 that abuts button 13 at surface 46, as seen in Figs. 5A-5C (showing only left and right plates 15a and 15b). As the button is depressed, plates 15a-15d are depressed via projections 42, thereby engaging contacts 17 and 36. The projections 42 of Maeda are not rotatably connected to button 13, as recited in independent claims 1 and 18, but rather merely abut button 13. Therefore, Maeda does not anticipate the claimed invention.

Moreover, the switch of Maeda could not be modified so that projections 42 of plates 15a-15b are rotatably connected to button 13 because the plates 15a-15d would destabilize. In particular, plates 15a-15d are stabilized on projections 20 by posts of projections 20 extending through apertures 43 of the plates. See column 5, lines 36-44. As seen in Figs. 5A-5C, if the projection 42 of the left plate 15a was modified to be rotatable connected to button 13, depression of the right side of button 13 would depress the right plate 15b to activate the switch but would also pull up the left plate 15a due to the connection between the projection 42 of the left plate and button 13. This lifting of the left plate 15a would release the left plate 15a from projections 20 so that the left plate 15a and projections 20 are no longer coupled, thereby destabilizing the plate. This is in contrast to the teachings of Maeda which requires that plate 15a be stabilized on projections 20, as noted above.

Therefore, independent claims 1 and 18 are allowable over Maeda and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 2, 4-6 and 19-20 are also allowable for the same reasons. Moreover, these claims recite additional features further distinguishing them from the prior art. For example, claim 2 recites that the button is rotatably connected to the base and claim 6 recites that the point of the first lever is located a distance that is at least twice as close to the first end of the first lever that the second end.

Claim Rejections 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maeda in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,693,246 to Rudolph et al. As discussed above, Maeda fails to disclose, teach or suggest all of the claim limitations of independent claim 1. Therefore, a prima facie case of obviousness has not been established with respect to claims 7 and 8 which both depend from claim 1.

Rudolph et al. does not cure the deficiencies of Maeda. Rudolph et al. teaches a rocker switch including a button 2 and actuating plate 11 supported by studs 14, 15 and 16 on switching contacts 17, 18 and 19, as seen in Fig. 1. Plate 11 of Rudolph et al. is not rotatably connected to button 2. Instead, appendages 5 and 6 of the button 2 of Rudolph et al. abut a crosspiece 10 of plate 11 to actuate the switch.

Moreover, one skilled in the art would not find it obvious to modify Maeda so that the plates 15a-15d are rotatably connected to the button because such a modification would destabilize the plates in contrast to the teachings of Maeda, as discussed above.

Allowable Subject Matter and New Claims 21-24

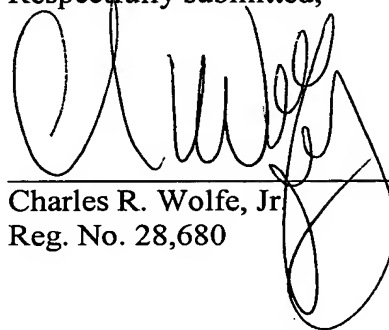
Applicants acknowledge and appreciate the allowance of claims 13-17 and the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 9-12. In response, new claim 21 is added which is original dependent claim 9 rewritten in independent form. New claims 22-24 depend from claim 21 and track the language of original dependent claims 10-12, respectively.

Regarding, the statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter, Applicants note that none of the allowed or allowable claims 9-17 recite a sequential operation of the tactile bridges as mentioned in the statement. Therefore, the claims are not limited to this feature and such feature was not required to allow the claims over the prior art.

Moreover, only claim 12 recites a rotational connection between the first lever and the button and claim 13 recites pivotal connections between the first and second levers and the button. Thus, the remaining allowed or allowable claims are not limited to a rotational or pivotal connection and such a feature was not required to allow these claims over the prior art.

In view of the foregoing, the application is in allowable condition. Prompt and favorable action is therefore respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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